

March 18, 2008

Obey in HAUGEN for update on HIGHWAY SAFETY PROJECT

HAUGEN, WI - Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) was in Haugen today for an update on plans to construct a new intersection at State Highway 53 and County Highway V to help improve safety for highway users and local residents. Obey secured \$1 million in federal funds last year to help the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (Wisconsin DoT) move forward with the project.

"Almost every man, woman, and child in this country gets in a car everyday and every year more than 2 million of them are injured in an accident and over 40,000 of them are killed. We can't prevent every accident from happening, but we can ensure that we're making the investments necessary to make our roads as safe as possible," said Obey. "The Intersection of Highway V and 53 is one of the deadliest in the State and I'm glad that we are finally moving forward with plans to address that."

"For what we spend on the war in Iraq, we could fully fund the construction of more than sixty of these intersections every day," Obey added. "That just goes to show you how much we could be doing here at home if we weren't stuck in this misbegotten war."

From 1994 to 2003 there were 36 accidents at the Highway 53 / County V interchange. At 1.25 crashes per 1 million vehicles the interchange's accident rate was below the level Wisconsin DoT considers "dangerous", but the severity of the accidents at 53/V was well above the state average, with 78% of those accidents causing serious injury or death, compared to a statewide average of 33%

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To address that danger while maintaining access for the local community, Wisconsin DoT is developing a plan that will replace the existing Highway 53 / County V intersection with an overpass, including entry and exit ramps

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